

BUFFALO CITY MUNICIPALITY

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Buffalo City Municipality Women's Football Academy Given Thumbs Up

There was general praise from high profile stakeholders the City's plans to establish a Non-Residential Women's Football Academy of Excellence as part of its 2010 legacy yesterday.

Buffalo City Municipality held a workshop on stakeholder consultation on the proposed academy in which representatives from the Buffalo City Council, SAFA, football structures, Walter Sisulu University, provincial government, border cycling and communities were present.

The workshop was facilitated by Gideon Sam, President of the National Sports Movement, whereby presentations were made where the Municipality vision behind this specific BCM 2010 legacy projects was outlined.

"This is not just about bricks and mortar, it's more specifically about human development through sport," said BCM Director for Executive Support Services Vuyo Zambodla.

On the infrastructure side, stakeholders were briefed that the Municipality was going to embark on an initial R10 million upgrades of the facilities in the Amalinda and Zwelitsha sports precincts.

It was also agreed that the Municipality together with the assistance of the various stakeholders should seek to establish a Women's Football League and a school league focussed on sourcing talent for the Academy from a tender age.

Gideon Sam, SASCOC President said: "This is ground breaking initiative for Buffalo City. It will assist other municipalities to follow suit and it will revive the interest of giving back to women's soccer."

"By doing so, BCM has set the cats amongst the pigeons in coming up a workable solution to women's football," he added.

The other high profile speaker at the workshop, Fran Hilton-Smith, SA National Women's Team Manager and Director for SAFA Women's High Performance Centre said: "This is a fantastic initiative that is definitely going to make women's football stronger across the country."

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"It is a first of its kind and it will help with growth in the national team as well and the development of young players."

She advised that the Municipality concentrate on bringing the qualified personnel including coaches to ensure success of the legacy project.

"The Eastern Cape has always had strong and skilful players and this will make it expand even further," Hilton-Smith said.

SAFA National Executive Member Eddie du Plooy pledged support saying that "this is a futuristic development for the City to venture into such untested grounds is unheard of in football circles in the country."

"We wish them all the success and guarantee them that they will get all the support in making it a success," he said.

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